



MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

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Martin O'Malley
Governor

Shari T. Wilson
Secretary

Anthony G. Brown
Lieutenant Governor

Robert M. Summers, Ph.D.
Deputy Secretary

March 17, 2009

The Honorable Sheila E. Hixson, Chairman
Ways and Means Committee
House Office Building, Room 131
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

The Honorable Peter A. Hammen, Chairman
Health and Government Operations Committee
House Office Building, Room 241
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

Dear Chairman Hixson and Chairman Hammen:

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) Waste Management Administration has reviewed House Bill 709, entitled *Children's Environmental Health Protection Act*, and we would like to offer our support for the bill's concept.

The Department embraces the consolidation of environmental, public health, and safety concerns under a single comprehensive plan to better manage environmental and public health risk in local school systems. This bill should improve environmental management in the schools throughout the State, and increase transparency of county school boards' implementation of processes and systems to ensure protection of public health, safety, and the environment for their students. Although MDE recognizes that there is a cost to implementation of this legislation, by developing a health and safety plan template for the counties, the State would provide necessary efficiency, consistency, and leadership in addressing children's environmental health concerns. MDE's Science Services Administration would be willing to assist the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene as necessary to fulfill the legislation's requirements.

Thank you for your consideration. We will continue to monitor House Bill 709 during the Committee's deliberations, and I am available to answer any questions you may have. Please feel free to contact me at 410-537-3812 or by e-mail at lnissley@mde.state.md.us if I can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

Lisa Nissley, Legislative Liaison/Environmental Justice Coordinator
Office of Legislation and Policy

cc: The Honorable James W. Hubbard
The Honorable Sheila E. Hixson
Clifford Mitchell, MD, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
Shari T. Wilson, Secretary
Richard Eskin, Director of Science Services Administration
Horacio Tablada, Director of Waste Management Administration
Heather Barthel, Director of Legislation and Policy